

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 202055  
ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY NEA/AFN:LPOPE:MAR  
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-----021614 100306Z /61

O 100243Z AUG 78  
FM SECSTATE WASHDC  
TO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE  
AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE  
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY AMMAN  
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM  
AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T STATE 202055

EXDIS, JIDDA FOR ATHERTON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, MILI, LE, US, FR, UNSC, IS

SUBJECT: LEBANON: MEETING WITH FRENCH AMBASSADOR  
AUGUST 9

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 202055

REF: SECTO 9030 (NOTAL)

1. NEA DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY DRAPER HAD A NEARLY  
HOUR-LONG REVIEW ON THE SITUATION IN LEBANON WITH FRENCH  
AMBASSADOR DE LABOULAYE ON AUGUST 9, IN ACCORD WITH REFTEL.  
DRAPER SAID THE SECRETARY HAD SENT INSTRUCTIONS FROM ALEX-  
ANDRIA THAT WE SHARE WITH THE AMBASSADOR OUR VIEWS, DES-

CRIBE CURRENT U.S. STRATEGY, EXAMINE HOW THE U.S. AND FRANCE MIGHT EFFECTIVELY EXERCISE INFLUENCE IN RESTRAINING THE SYRIANS AND MARONITE LEADERS, AND MOVE TOGETHER COOPERATIVELY TO HELP DEFUSE THE SITUATION, BOTH IN THE SOUTHERN LEBANON OPERATION AND IN BEIRUT. DRAPER ADDED THAT WE WERE AWARE OF AND APPRECIATED THE EFFORTS THE FRENCH HAD TAKEN TO EASE THE SITUATION IN APPROACHES IN BEIRUT, DAMASCUS, AND JERUSALEM.

2. DRAPER SAID THAT WE WERE TRYING TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEMS IN SOUTH LEBANON AND IN THE BEIRUT AREA SIMULTANEOUSLY, FOR THEY WERE INTERTWINED IN MANY RESPECTS, BUT THAT THE MARONITE MILITIA-SYRIAN CONFRONTATION IN THE BEIRUT AREA WAS

MORE DANGEROUS BECAUSE OF THE RISKS THAT THE ISRAELIS WOULD BECOME MORE DEEPLY INVOLVED.

3. TALKS ON LEBANON HAD OCCUPIED A GOOD DEAL OF THE SECRETARY'S TIME ON HIS JERUSALEM VISIT. BEGIN HAD MENTIONED INTELLIGENCE REPORTS THAT THERE WOULD BE A SYRIAN ATTEMPT TO CRUSH THE MILITIAS IN THE PERIOD AUGUST 8-10. (WE HAD LATER RAISED ISSUE WITH THE SYRIANS AND HAD BEEN TOLD THAT THERE WAS NO BASIC CHANGE IN THE SYRIAN POSITION. WE SUBSEQUENTLY HAD PASSED THIS INFORMATION TO BEGIN WHO HAD SAID HE WOULD TAKE IT INTO ACCOUNT, BUT IT WAS NEVERTHELESS CLEAR THAT HE REMAINED DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS OF SYRIAN  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 202055

INTENTIONS.) THE ATMOSPHERE IN ISRAEL WAS BECOMING CHARGED WITH CALLS FOR INTERVENTION ON THE SIDE OF THE MARONITES.

4. THE SECRETARY HAD ALSO PRESSED THE ISRAELIS TO GET HADDAD TO ALLOW THE LEBANESE BATTALION NOW STUCK IN KAWKABA TO PROCEED TO ITS DESTINATION. HE HAD OBTAINED ISRAELI AGREEMENT TO AN ARRANGEMENT WHEREBY AT LEAST PART OF THE LEBANESE FORCE WOULD BE BROUGHT TO TIBNINE BY HELICOPTER PROVIDED THE QUESTION OF HADDAD'S STATUS COULD BE LEFT IN ABEYANCE. THE ISRAELIS HAD UNDERTAKEN TO WORK TO GET HADDAD TO AGREE TO THIS ARRANGEMENT. WE WERE WAITING FOR A LEBANESE RESPONSE.

5. DRAPER STRESSED THAT WHILE WE WERE WORKING HARD ON THE PROBLEM OF SOUTH LEBANON, THE SITUATION IN BEIRUT WAS VERY DANGEROUS. THE PORT REMAINED CLOSED, ECONOMIC ACTIVITY HAD BEEN AFFECTED AND TENS OF THOUSANDS OF NEW REFUGEES HAD BEEN CREATED. (DRAWING ON SECRETARY'S GUIDANCE EARLIER REPEATED TO PARIS), DRAPER SAID WE WERE MOVING TO ENCOURAGE KEY ARAB STATES TO PLAY A MORE ACTIVE ROLE, PARTICULARLY SAUDI ARABIA, THE UAE, SUDAN, AND KUWAIT. WE HAD NOT YET MOVED FORMALLY TO SUGGEST MEETING

OF THESE STATES WITH LEBANON AND SYRIA, BUT AMBASSADOR  
ATHERTON WAS SOUNDING OUT THE SAUDIS TODAY AND AMBASSADOR  
PARKER IN BEIRUT WOULD BE DISCUSSING THE IDEA WITH THE  
LEBANESE. WE WOULD MAKE THE POINT WITH THE ARABS THAT  
UNLESS SOMETHING WERE DONE THERE WAS A SERIOUS RISK OF  
GREATER ISRAELI INVOLVEMENT. WE WOULD NOT BE CONVEYING  
AN ISRAELI THREAT BUT STATING THE OBVIOUS. DRAPER EM-  
PHASIZED THAT WE HAD NO IMMEDIATE REASON TO THINK THE  
ISRAELIS WERE PREPARED TO INTERVENE, BUT IF SHELLING  
RESUMED IN BEIRUT PRESSURE FOR ISRAELI ACTION WOULD BE-  
COME INTENSE.

6. DRAPER AND THE AMBASSADOR EXCHANGED EXPLANATIONS OF  
THE BASIC POLICY LINES FOLLOWED RESPECTIVELY BY THE U.S.  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 202055

AND FRANCE, THE WAYS IN WHICH ISRAEL MIGHT THEORETICALLY  
INTERVENE, AND THE ATTITUDES OF KEY FIGURES OVER WHICH  
FRANCE HAS INFLUENCE. THE AMBASSADOR WAS CLEARLY UP TO  
DATE ON EVERY CURRENT FACET OF THE LEBANESE SITUATION,  
AND DRAPER COMMENTED THAT U.S. HAD GREAT RESPECT FOR  
AMBASSADOR ARGOD AND GENERAL CUQ.

7. AMBASSADOR DE LABOULAYE SAID THAT HE BELIEVED BOTH  
GOVERNMENTS SHARED THE VIEW THAT THE KEY WAS TO STRENGTHEN  
THE AUTHORITY OF THE SARKIS GOVERNMENT. THERE WAS A LINK  
BETWEEN THE FAILURE OF THE GOVERNMENT'S MOVE TO SEND  
TROOPS SOUTH AND ITS INABILITY TO DO ANYTHING ABOUT  
DETERIORATING SITUATION IN BEIRUT. HE BELIEVED THEREFORE,  
SPEAKING PERSONALLY, THAT A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM OF  
THE SOUTH MUST BE FOUND FIRST. THE ISRAELIS COULD CONTROL  
HADDAD IF THEY WANTED TO. ACCORDING TO HIS INFORMATION  
ISRAELI JUNIOR OFFICERS AT THE UNIT LEVEL WITH THE  
CHRISTIAN MILITIAS IN THE SOUTH WERE SPREADING SCARE  
STORIES ABOUT SYRIAN INFLUENCE OVER THE FORCE AND EN-  
COURAGING MILITIA OPPOSITION TO IT. PERHAPS A WAY COULD  
BE FOUND TO LEAVE THE HADDAD PROBLEM ASIDE, BUT IT WAS  
ESSENTIAL TO GET THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF LEBANESE TROOPS  
TO TIBNINE. IF THIS WERE DONE, THE CHANCES THAT SYRIA  
WOULD ACCEPT AN ARABIZATION OF THE PROBLEM IN BEIRUT  
WOULD BE BETTER. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, HOWEVER, HE  
THOUGHT THE PRIORITY WAS ACTION IN THE SOUTH.

8. DRAPER SAID WE AGREED WITH THE VIEW THAT RESOLUTION  
OF THE KAWKABA PROBLEM COULD ASSIST THE PROBLEM IN  
BEIRUT, BUT WHILE NEGOTIATIONS ON THE PROBLEM OF THE SOUTH  
WERE CONTINUING TIME WAS GETTING SHORT. THERE WAS DANGER  
OF NEW, LARGE-SCALE MARONITE-SYRIAN CONFRONTATIONS IN  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 05 STATE 202055

BEIRUT. THE SECRETARY HAD THEREFORE ASKED THAT WE DISCUSS WHETHER FRANCE COULD BRING ITS IMPORTANT INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON THE MARONITE LEADERSHIP IN BEIRUT. SOME CHRISTIAN ELEMENTS WERE PLAYING A VERY DANGEROUS GAME AND THEY HAD TO BE DISCOURAGED STRONGLY. OTHERWISE, WIDER HOSTILITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST COULD BE THE END RESULT.

9. AMBASSADOR DE LABOULAYE SAID HE THOUGHT THAT FRANCE COULD MAKE A PARTICULAR EFFORT WITH PIERRE GEMAYEL AND COULD ALSO TRY WITH CAMILLE CHAMOUN, FRANCE COULD URGE THEM TO USE THEIR INFLUENCE WITH THE MILITIAS IN THE SOUTH, AS WELL AS TO REFRAIN FROM PROVOKING THE SYRIANS. LABOULAYE VOLUNTEERED THAT THE CONTACT COULD ALSO BE MADE WITH THE MARONITE PATRIARCH WHO WAS IN ROME.

10. AMBASSADOR APPEARED PLEASED THAT THE SECRETARY HAD INSTRUCTED THAT THIS EXCHANGE WITH US BE UNDERTAKEN. HE SAID HE WOULD CONSULT PARIS ON THE MFA'S CURRENT APPRECIATION OF THE SITUATION AND WOULD BE BACK TO US SHORTLY.

11. (DRAPER UNDERSCORED THEME THROUGHOUT TALK THAT WE THOUGHT IT WISE FOR EACH OF US TO USE OUR INFLUENCE WHEREVER WE COULD, NOT LEANING EXCLUSIVELY ON ONE SIDE OR ANOTHER. AMBASSADOR PICKED UP THEME, NOTING FRANCE HAD MADE DEMARCHES IN ISRAEL AND SYRIA AS WELL AS WITH LEBANESE AND WOULD CONTINUE.) VANCE

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## Message Attributes

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